



New Haven Democracy Fund

"To ensure that all the citizens of New Haven have a fair and meaningful opportunity to participate in the election of mayor."
New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article XI, §2-821 • Established in 2007 • democracyfund@newhavenct.net



ANNUAL REPORT

To: Mayor Toni Harp and the New Haven Board of Alders

Date: January 21, 2017

Pursuant to Section 2-823(a) of the Democracy Fund Ordinance and Section 2 of the Democracy Fund Board Bylaws, the New Haven Democracy Fund Board issues an annual report to the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen, containing a statement of the financial condition and expenditures of the Fund, a summary of the Board's activities for the preceding year, and a request for appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year.

I. Statement of Financial Condition and Expenditures

The Democracy Fund (the "Fund") began calendar year 2015 with \$316091.28 and ended the calendar year with \$298,758.00.

Alyson Heimer was selected to be the new Administrator in November 2014, and her contract was renewed in July 2016.

In total, the Fund spent:

Administrator Costs: \$ 17,333.28

A. Candidate Contributions

The fund did not distribute money to candidates in 2016.

B. Administrator Costs

Expenditures from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016 for the services of Fund Administrator Alyson Heimer were as follows:

Monthly payments of \$2,166.66 for January 2016 - August 2016, were all paid within the 2016 calendar year. The remaining months, September-December will be paid out in 2017.

Total 2016 Administrator Expenditure \$26,000.00

C. Debate Costs

None.

II. Board Vacancies

During 2016 Jared Milfred stepped down from the Democracy Fund Board leaving the position of Chair open.

Currently, three seats remain open. Members of any party can apply to fill the vacancies but a maximum of one Democrat, two Green party, and two Republicans would be allowed under the ordinance.

As of January 1, 2016, Fund board members were:

- Chair Jared Milfred (Democrat - term expiration 8/1/17)
- Vice Chair Gerald Martin (Green - term expiration 8/1/16)
- Treasurer Sergio Rodriguez (Democrat - term expiration 8/1/18)
- William Wynn (Republican - term expiration 8/1/17)
- Jack Paulishen (Democrat - term expiration 8/1/18)

Elections were held in October 2016, after which point the Fund membership was as follows:

- Chair Sergio Rodriguez (Democrat - term expiration 8/1/18)
- Vice Chair William Wynn (Republican - term expiration 8/1/17)
- Secretary Jack Paulishen (Democrat - term expiration 8/1/18)

Gerald Martin (Green - term expiration 8/1/17)

Martin agreed to continue serving on the board until either a new board member or can be found or August 2017, whichever comes first so that the board may be able to have quorum to conduct business. The Fund will canvass its Board members whose terms expire in 2017 to determine if they will return and the Fund further hopes to fill any empty seats by the end of 2017.

III. Summary of Board Activities

In 2016, The Fund continued efforts to work with the Board of Alder and the Mayor's office to streamline the nomination of candidates for the Fund Board when making quorum was an issue early in the primary season. The Fund worked with the Mayor's Office and Board of Alders to fill vacant seats on the Board, but none were added.

The Democracy Fund Administrator traveled to Ellington, CT and Cambridge, MA to speak about the importance of public financing and answer questions for town council members in both locations who were considering similar programs. Heimer also was a guest on New Haven Independent Radio (WNHH) to talk about the importance of public financing and the Democracy Fund program in New Haven in November.

The Fund continues to work with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) to reduce the cumbersome paperwork reporting requirements while maintaining transparency and compliance with state law.

The Fund looks forward to exploring and implementing creative solutions to make campaign finance data more transparent and available -- open government remains at the heart of the Democracy Fund's mission. Continued personnel shortages in the IT department at New Haven City Hall impedes the Board's effort to modernize our website and make campaign finance records more readily available to the public. The Board hopes 2017 will begin with the hiring of a permanent webmaster and a projected website redesign for the city.

IV. **Request for Appropriations**

The Democracy Fund Board is not requesting any appropriations at this time. The Fund received a \$200,000.00 replenishment in 2013. In 2017, The Fund expects to expend the encumbrance for the Administrator's contract, totalling \$26,000. The Fund is also hopeful that mayoral candidates will use The Fund when seeking public office. Even if several candidates were to use the fund in 2017, it is highly unlikely a replenishment would be needed.